NIEM in Canada: Standards in International Information Sharing

Posted by Dr. David Bray, PM-ISE Executive for Innovation, Integration, & Interoperability on Monday, January 9, 2012

A few weeks ago, I joined Canadian government representatives in promoting NIEM adoption (www.niem.gov [1] | www.niem.ca [2]) to their law enforcement and public safety communities. NIEM is a model for information sharing technical standards, and it has had strong adoption here in the U.S. among our law enforcement, public safety, justice, and homeland security communities. Canadian adoption of NIEM represents a very exciting prospect, since international partners are one of the five key communities of the ISE [3], and this could accelerate broader international adoption of a standardized approach to information sharing.

With the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Chief Superintendent Robert Morrison is leading the way, and had this to relay about Canada's efforts:

> Canada is in its infancy developing data standards and we are very fortunate to build on the efforts and success the United States has accomplished. Working in partnership with the PM-ISE is a significant advantage to Canada. Canada can learn a great deal by working with our American friends and partners to develop a better understanding of how to improve the management, discovery, fusing, sharing, delivery, and collaboration of intelligence. Canada is working towards the development of an ISE/NIEM office to coordinate information sharing standards across Government.

While in Ottawa, we discussed the great work being done by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Public Safety Canada to encourage NIEM adoption. This included participating in a NIEM Industry Forum where vendors talked about existing systems they provided to Canada and the benefits of standardizing a specific NIEM Information Exchange Package Documentation (IEPD) [4] for both the Canadian government and industry. This would help industry focus more on innovation and less on supporting multiple custom interfaces among systems.

In addition to exploring how to establish their own Information Sharing Environment, Canada is pursuing how to leverage the next version of the SAR version 2.0 functional standard for Canadian interests. Stay tuned for more exciting updates, and here's to a dawn of a great partnership!

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[4] http://niem.gov/technical/model-package-description/Pages/iepd-lifecycle.aspx

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